



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer-
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

At its meeting held February 6, 2007, the Board took the following action:

62-A

The following statement was entered into the record for Supervisors Antonovich and Yaroslavsky:

“On February 1, 2007, KNBC-TV’s investigative unit reported poor food handling practices, improper health inspections and inappropriate behavior by operators of food and produce vendors at the 7th Street Produce Market. The TV news report showed images of a man urinating next to produce, rat infestations, and many other unsanitary and unsavory conditions. The news footage also uncovered lax enforcement of health codes by Environmental Health Services staff, some of whom were seen warning produce vendors of the impending TV news investigation.

“Although the 7th Street Produce Market has many inherent site problems, such as the absence of loading docks and minimal shared bathrooms, it appears the Department of Public Health has not provided the appropriate level of inspection and enforcement. According to a memo dated February 1, 2007 from the Director of Public Health, following KNBC-TV’s initial inquiries last November, investigators from the Department quickly confirmed many of the health safety violations alleged by KNBC-TV to have taken place. The Department’s memo also revealed that while the Department has the authority and responsibility to license and inspect individual produce vendors located within a wholesale produce facility, it may have jurisdictional limitations on the licensing and inspection of wholesale produce facilities, themselves.”

Dr. Jonathan E. Fielding, Director, and Terrance Powell, Acting Director of Environmental Health, Department of Public Health, responded questions posed by the Board.

Mr. Arnold Sachs also addressed the Board.

(Continued on Page 2)

After discussion, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, seconded by Supervisor Yaroslavsky, unanimously carried, the Director of Public Health was instructed to report back to the Board within 15 days on:

1. Recommendations for increasing the number of produce vendor inspections to be required on an annual basis;
2. Any appropriate changes in either State or County regulations and/or codes related to the licensing, inspection and enforcement of wholesale produce facilities;
3. Improving coordination between cities and the County in permitting and inspecting the condition and operation of wholesale produce facilities;
4. A review of the violations that have been rendered or given to other distribution centers within Los Angeles County to see if there's a pattern, or if the 7th Street Market is an exception to the enforcement efforts of the Department of Public Health;
5. A timeline of actions taken by the on-site inspectors responsible for carrying out the health rules and regulations in these distribution centers; and
6. Whether County Counsel can assist in determining, in coordination with the City of Los Angeles, if any legal actions need to be taken in relation to the 7th Street Market violations.

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Copies distributed:

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County Counsel
Director of Public Health
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